

I am writing about the mental health subcommittee, here is my testimony:

I worked in both inpatient and outpatient psych and substance abuse before becoming a stay at home mother with a part time private practice. Here is what I believe:

- Mental health professionals are grossly underpaid (not the doctors, the therapists)
- Mental health starts early, therefore schools should be equipped with more mental health professionals. Marriage and Family therapists are only recently able to work in schools, however they aren't getting in them quick enough. They are trained for working with families and other parties, effectively and efficiently. They would add a layer of being able to put all the pieces together with an individual and not letting them fall through the cracks.
- I believe every school should have a MFT (marriage and family therapist) that would facilitate the home and schools worlds.
- If the help doesn't happen in the early years, it just gets harder and harder to reach the person.
- Once people are out of school, they are harder to track and help.
 - The insurance companies push treatment for medication and less so for therapy. Especially in inpatient, if they aren't being given medication, then they get discharged. It's not always the solution.
 - They would have a huge amount of influence if they worked with professionals on helping them start and run groups.
 - Groups are highly effective and cost effective way with treatment

I wish I could think of more. However, this is enough for now.

Thank you,
Lenore Pranzo, LMFT
Mother and concerned citizen in Redding, CT